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## EU-25

### Trade Policy Monitoring

## EU launches Action Plan for the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2006-2010

### 2006

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**Report Highlights:**

On March 30, 2006, the Austrian EU Presidency will host an International Expert Conference on Animal Welfare in Brussels. This is one of the first events in the EU Action Plan on Animal Welfare. From 2006 to 2010, the Action Plan sets out 28 different actions in 5 different areas, of which 13 are already in the timetable for 2006.

The EC is very serious about enhancing public awareness on animal welfare, even so far as to education for children. Additionally, the EC is firmly committed to put animal welfare on the agenda of international collaboration platforms, especially the International Animal Health Organization (OIE).

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Includes PSD Changes: No  
Includes Trade Matrix: No  
Unscheduled Report  
Brussels USEU [BE2]  
[E3]

## EU Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2006-2010 to implement the intentions of the Treaty of Amsterdam

On January 23, 2006, the European Commission (EC) adopted the Community Action Plan on the Protection and Welfare of Animals 2006-2010. The EC expects that the Action Plan will ensure that animal welfare is addressed in the coming years, in all EU sectors and through EU relations with Third countries. For the period 2006-2010, five areas of action were selected to meet this objective, as there are: upgrading minimum standards for animal welfare; promoting research and alternative approaches to animal testing; introducing standardized animal welfare indicators; better informing animal handlers and the general public on animal welfare issues; and supporting international initiatives for the protection of animals.

Markos Kyprianou, Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection, in a press release [Improving animal welfare: EU Action Plan adopted](#)<sup>1</sup>, presented the Action Plan with the words: *"The protection and welfare of animals is crucial, not least for ethical and moral reasons but also to ensure animal health and the quality of food. The Commission has drawn on detailed feedback from consumers, stakeholders, scientists and international organizations in developing this Action Plan, and over the next 5 years we intend to add to and upgrade existing animal welfare rules, so that EU standards remain amongst the highest in the world."*

The Animal Welfare Action Plan includes a 5-year legislative work plan to implement European animal welfare principles as foreseen in the Treaty of Amsterdam in the European food production. *"The Treaty of Amsterdam, in force since May 1999, lays out new ground rules for the actions of the European Union (EU) on animal welfare in a special " [Protocol on the Protection and Welfare of Animals](#)". It recognizes that animals are sentient beings and obliges the European Institutions to pay full regard to the welfare requirements of animals when formulating and implementing Community legislation".*

The EC [Animal Health and Welfare](#)<sup>2</sup> website also refers to the failed European Constitution, which was down voted in France and The Netherlands and which reiterates: *"The new [Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe](#) signed on 29 October 2004 by the Heads of State or Government of the 25 Member States and the 3 candidate countries also retains the commitment to ensuring the protection of animals."*

### Objectives and Initiatives of the Action Plan

The EC has set out the following primary objectives for the Action Plan:

- To give a clearer direction to EU animal welfare policies
- To continue the promotion of high animal welfare standards
- To provide better focus for the allocation of resources
- To support future trends in animal welfare research
- To continue to seek alternative solutions to animal testing
- To ensure a more consistent and coordinated approach to animal welfare across all EU policy areas

The Action Plan provides initiatives in 5 broad areas of animal welfare for the 2006-2010 period:

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<sup>1</sup>

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/64&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

<sup>2</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/welfare/policy/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/welfare/policy/index_en.htm)

- Upgrading minimum standards for animal protection and welfare
- Giving high priority to promoting policy-oriented research and the application of the "3Rs" principle (replacement, reduction and refinement of the use of animals in experiments) to animal testing
- Introducing standardized animal welfare indicators
- Ensuring animal handlers and the general public are more involved and informed on animal welfare issues
- Supporting and initiating further international initiatives to raise awareness of, and create greater consensus on, animal welfare

A web page has been dedicated to this Action Plan for Animal Welfare at [http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/actionplan\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/welfare/actionplan/actionplan_en.htm)

### Timetable for specific actions

A detailed work plan to execute the objectives of the Animal Welfare is included in the [Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council](#)<sup>3</sup>. This timetable includes 28 different actions, of which 13 are scheduled for 2006. The scope of these actions not only encompasses all farm animals and fur animals, but also foresees new legislation for the welfare of laboratory animals. The Action Plan further aims to improve animal welfare through on-farm inspection of welfare indicators, real time monitoring of animal transports, enhanced slaughter procedures, but also to stimulate research concerning the parameters for animal welfare, including genetics; consumer education on animal welfare for children and consumers; food labeling; establishing a European Animal Welfare Quality Standard, as well as promoting animal welfare standards at the international level and in Third countries. The [Commission working document](#)<sup>4</sup> elaborates more in detail about the five action areas. The [Commission Staff Working Document](#)<sup>5</sup> explains the EC strategy as well as offering existing legislative documents and European scientific opinions.

### Impact of the Action Plan for Animal Welfare

Commissioner Kyprianou, before the Agriculture/Fisheries Council of February 2006, argued that animal welfare should be seen as a business opportunity, rather than a burden, as, for an example, the new broiler welfare proposal would only add 2.5-8 eurocents to the cost of production of a chicken to yield a higher quality product. He did this in response to concerns from EU farming groups that the implementation of new animal welfare requirements will put European animal production at an even bigger competitive disadvantage in the world than it already is. They fear that this would lead to the loss of many thousands of jobs in European farms and processing industries. Therefore, they are strongly advocating the same requirements on all agricultural imports into the EU, in an attempt to level the playing field.

### International Conference on Animal Welfare

On March 30, 2006, the Austrian Presidency is organizing an International Expert Conference in Brussels titled "Animal Welfare: A part of EU Food Chain Policy." Conference program and details is available on the Austrian Presidency website <http://www.bmgf.gv.at/cms/site/attachments/4/4/8/CH0366/CMS1137061255235/lo5.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/welfare/com\\_action\\_plan230106\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/welfare/com_action_plan230106_en.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/welfare/work\\_doc\\_strategic\\_basis230106\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/welfare/work_doc_strategic_basis230106_en.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/welfare/comm\\_staff\\_work\\_doc\\_protection230106\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/animal/welfare/comm_staff_work_doc_protection230106_en.pdf)

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